

## THOU ART A LIGHT.

O Love, thou art to me a light  
That shines upon my way,  
And guides me through the lonesome night  
Unto a sweeter day.

An angel pure, O Love, thou art;  
For when I see thy face  
I feel an influence on my heart  
Of sweet and heavenly grace.

No stained thought the soul can soil,  
When thou, my Love, art near—  
No low desire, no word of guile,  
Nor passion insincere.

O stay with me and be my love,  
My light, my angel pure!  
And I to thee will faithful prove  
While earthly days endure.

D. J. Donohoe, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

## A TIMELY SHOT.

## A Boy's Adventure in the Wilds of Africa.

The anxiety and distress of Ralph Campbell, a youthful master's mate from the survey gun ship Petrel, were beyond description when, on awakening one morning in his quarters—an African hut on a bank of the Senegal river, up which he had been sent a long distance on government business—he discovered that his little brother, Frank, was missing.

Frank was a bright, clever boy of twelve, who had accompanied his brother from the ship, which was anchored outside the bar. He was the captain's nephew, and was a general pet and favorite aboard the vessel, where he had been receiving instructions to fit him for naval duties.

Ralph, who now had all his cutter's crew looking for the lost lad, worried much over the perils to which the little fellow might be exposed from venomous serpents and wild beasts.

At length, while searching in the thick shrubbery on the river's bank, the youth reached a cove where, on the night before, he had left a small canoe which he had bought of one of the natives.

He had intended to use it for navigating some of the shallow creeks further up the river, as the cutter he had charge of was too deep and wide for that purpose. Startled to perceive that the canoe was missing, a suspicion of the truth broke all at once upon his mind.

He remembered having remarked to a sailor, in Frank's hearing, that the little craft must be brought up and made fast to the latter the first thing in the morning. The boy, eager to please his brother, had probably risen and gone, before any of the rest of the party were awake, to fetch the canoe, but if so, what had become of him? Ralph, shuddering, thought of the hideous crocodiles that infested this river, while he vainly scanned it for some sign of the lad.

Then, having resolved not to wait for the return of his men, but to take the cutter and go off alone in search of his lost brother, he hurried back to the bank in front of the hut, alongside of which the boat lay.

This boat was a light, swift one,

which could be easily sculled by an oar. There was a small, loaded swivel ready for use, fixed in the bow, but its weight would not interfere with the speed of the craft.

The young officer was soon vigorously sculling the vessel on its way, going with the tide, as he thought that Frank would have been apt to take this course. Past lofty elevations covered with shrubbery and flowers glided the cutter, often shadowed by the far-extending branches of huge baobab trees that formed broad green arches above it.

It had rounded a peninsula full of bloom and foliage, when the watchful youth saw ahead of him an overturned, broken canoe. He soon reached it, and, by the peculiar carving on the bow, he recognized it as the missing canoe.

It had been partly crushed—most likely, he thought, by the teeth of a crocodile.

In dismay, he pulled Frank's little cap from a jagged projection of the broken wood on which it was caught. The dreadful truth forced itself on his mind.

The lad had been pursued by the monster that had destroyed the canoe.

Had he already met his fate? The young officer tried to shake off his despondency—to hope, in spite of appearances, that his brother might, in some way, have escaped and still be alive.

He looked toward the peninsula from which the canoe seemed to have drifted. This peninsula, consisting of two high, projecting banks composed of soft rock and earth, opposite each other, about fifteen feet apart, was roofed by the branches of slender trees that flourished in wild luxuriance on both banks.

The trunks of these trees slanted so that their boughs intermingled and were so thickly interwoven with vines that they formed a dense canopy of leaves and blossoms over the open space beneath, which thus resembled a sort of long water cavern.

Ralph directed the cutter to this cavern, and, looking through the green archway into the partial obscurity beyond, he beheld a sight well calculated to arouse apprehension.

In the back part of the cavern, lying in a shallow, among sandbanks that partially concealed it, was a large crocodile, with its head raised and thrown back and its horrible jaws wide open, while its eyes were strained, as if turned up toward some elevated point.

Gazing in the same direction, Ralph was startled to see, about ten feet above those hideous jaws, the form of his little brother, lying, with pale face and closed eyes, on the narrow shelf of a rock. The rock was under the branches of slender trees, which rose on each side of it from low banks on the right and left, about two yards from the elevation. One of the overhanging branches, broken off, explained the boy's situation.

He had evidently climbed the tree to escape the crocodile, had crept out on the slender branch, it had given way,

and he had fallen on the rock, his head striking it with force enough to render him unconscious. There he now lay, so perilously near the edge of the rock-shelf that the slightest movement on his part would cause him to roll off and fall into the jaws of the monster below. As he was probably but temporarily stunned, he was liable to move at any moment. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance, in order to insure his safety, that he should be speedily conveyed from his dangerous position.

Ralph feared that a discharge of the swivel or of any firearm at the crocodile, would only be attended with fatal results to Frank. The sandbanks might hinder the shot from striking the fierce reptile, while the shock would be pretty sure to dislodge the senseless lad from the shelf, and thus bring him down into the power of his voracious enemy.

The youth lost no time in heading his boat toward the rock. But the cutter was some fathoms from it, when the keel caught in a submerged sandbank. Drawing his sword, Ralph sprang out, and quickly waded toward the rock. Slight ledges and protruding spurs on its front would enable him, he thought, to climb up to his brother; in fact, there was no other way of reaching him. The young officer held his sword ready for use, in case the crocodile, close to which he would be obliged to pass, should venture to attack him.

Ralph, however, kept his eyes fastened upon the crocodile.

The monster turned its head when he was near it and snapped at him.

He avoided it by stepping sideways; then he commenced to strike and thrust vigorously at its jaws with his sword. It retreated a few yards but broke his blade in two with its teeth as it twisted its body around. Thinking it would leave him, Ralph sprang to the rock. Just then little Frank, recovering his senses, gave a slight cry and fell from the ledge above. The young officer saw him in time to catch him in his arms. As he turned to convey him to the cutter, he perceived that the crocodile, now between him and the boat, with open jaws, was prepared to renew the attack.

He set his confused brother upon his feet in the shallow water, and drawing the single-barrelled navy pistol which he carried in his belt, he fired at the creature's big, yawning mouth. But, owing to the animal's sheering a little to seize the boy, now on one side of his protector, it received the shot on the edge of its jaw.

Twisting itself away from the twain, it commenced, as if in blended rage and pain, to thrash the shallows with its hard, bony tail.

As Ralph was conveying his brother past the reptile, toward the boat, his left ankle caught between two small under-water rocks, and was temporarily sprained.

"Never mind," said Frank, as the hurt youth dragged himself along with difficulty, "I am now able to walk. You need not carry me. I will help you."